CLAIMS:

1. Apparatus for detecting an object, the apparatus comprising:
    - a light source adapted to emit a beam of light at wavelengths absorbed by the object or a coating thereon;
    - a detector adapted to detect light at wavelengths fluoresced by the object or coating thereon; and
    - a processor adapted to determine the presence of an object from the light detected by the detector.

2. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further including an oscillator to modulate the light source.

3. Apparatus as claimed in claim 2, further including a driver circuit.

4. Apparatus as claimed in claim 2 or claim 3, wherein the processor includes a mixer, which receives the modulation signal from the oscillator, and a signal from the detector.

5. Apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein the processor further includes a low-pass filter which is adapted to pass signals of a significant magnitude if a coherent signal averaged over time is present.

6. Apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the processor further includes a threshold detector, which compares the signal from the low-pass filter with a predetermined threshold, and sends a signal to an indicator is the signal exceeds the threshold, to indicate the presence of a ball.

7. Apparatus as claimed in claim 2 or any one of claims 3 to 6 as dependent upon claim 2, wherein the modulation will be in the frequency range 10 Hz to 100 MHz.

8. A method for locating lost objects, the objects having a coating which absorbs light at one wavelength, and fluoresces at a second wavelength; the method consisting in the steps of:
    - providing a bead of light having a wavelength absorbed by the coating on the object;
    - detecting light of wavelengths fluoresced the object to be located; and
    - determining from the light detected the presence or otherwise of the object.